



*M*ISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the 49th Military Police Brigade is to maintain an organized and trained military force, capable of timely and effective response to State emergencies, or on occasions deemed appropriate by the Governor, to provide military assistance to civil and military authorities for Homeland Security and in the preservation of life, property, and public safety.

*H*ISTORY

When Ernest Gruening took office as Governor of the Territory of Alaska in December 1939, there had never been a National Guard in Alaska. Governor Gruening took the necessary steps to create one. This effort resulted in the 279th Infantry Battalion. In WWII this unit was federalized, and deployed in September 1941. As a result of this action, the National Guard was not available to Alaska to assume a role of local defense. Governor Gruening, therefore decided that every able-bodied male otherwise not in the military or essential-to-war service would be enrolled in a territorial guard and kept at home for the defense of Alaska. When the National Guard returned to the State after the end of WWII, the Alaska Territorial Guard was disbanded and gradually faded into history. When Alaska became the 49th State, the statutes that were initially established included provisions that all able-bodied citizens of the United States residing in the State of Alaska over the age of 17 are members of the state militia. Under these laws, specifically A.S. Title 26.05.010, the State Militia is divided into the organized militia consisting of members of the Alaska National Guard, the Alaska Naval Militia, the Alaska State Militia currently called the 49th Military Police Brigade (49th MP BDE), and the unorganized militia, consisting of all other citizens available for service. These statutes are still in effect today. Although these statutes had been on the books for many years, the Alaska State Militia was not organized until early 1984 when Governor William Sheffield organized the Alaska State Guard as an all-volunteer, reserve military resource. In 1987 the name of the organization was changed to the Alaska State Defense Force (ASDF) to avoid confusion with the Alaska National Guard. In 2004 the name was changed the 49th Military Police Brigade (49th MP BDE)

OVERVIEW

Until recently the 49th MP BDE trained primarily as backup for the Alaska National Guard in the event the Guard would be federalized. However, recent events have caused significant changes in our nation's domestic and foreign priorities. This change in the paradigm of military affairs resulted in a shift in our mission from forward deployment to that of Homeland Security and civil support.

The primary role of the 49th MP BDE is to actively participate with State and local emergency management agencies in Homeland Security, disaster assistance, planning, exercises, and operations in response and recovery for both natural and man-made disasters. In recent years the 49th MP BDE has been activated for disaster response and recovery assistance in the '95 South Central Floods, '96 Akutan Volcano, the '96 Millers Reach Fire, Stand-downs for Homeless Vets, '98 Alaska Fisheries disaster, '99 Turnagain Pass Avalanche, and has assisted in many other civil events and state emergencies as of 2008 . After the 9-11-2001 terrorists attack, the 49th MP BDE has been providing classified security missions to portions of the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline, Alaska Railroad, and Alaska's boat harbors and ports. In all cases the 49th MP BDE has received commendations for its efforts in helping the citizens of the State of Alaska. Some of the areas of operations we have served in during these events have been: Provide Security as a military police brigade, aerial photography, reconnaissance, and documentation, evacuation, shelter management, state emergency coordination center operations, emergency communications, road blocks, and highway checkpoints. Our troops come from a diverse background; from laborers to lawyers, from mechanics to medical personnel, and many are prior military or prior law enforcement. Our only commonality is that we choose to serve the citizens of Alaska. As our mission states, we are capable of a timely and effective response to state emergencies. Accomplishment of this task takes training, training and more training.

The 49th MP BDE continues to validate its mission by training in areas of military operations, emergency management, and communications. Many of our members attend extensive law enforcement training and graduate a dedicated academy to become authorized peace officers to assist in a reserve state law enforcement role. They also receive training from various emergency organizations. Some of these organizations are the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, various local government emergency management agencies, various local law enforcement agencies, and civil agencies such as the American Red Cross.

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